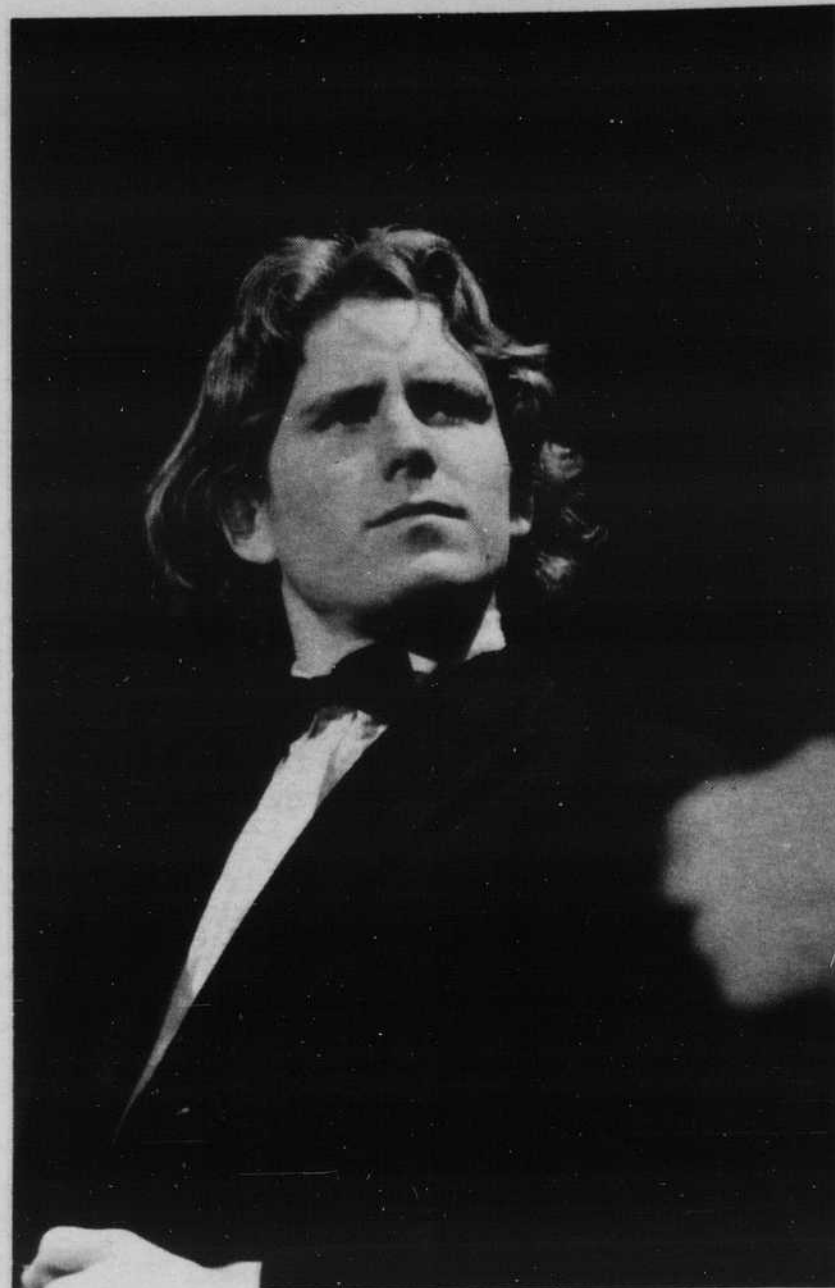




Diego (Albert Zarth) discusses a duel with Prestino (David Sage) and Francisco Savio.



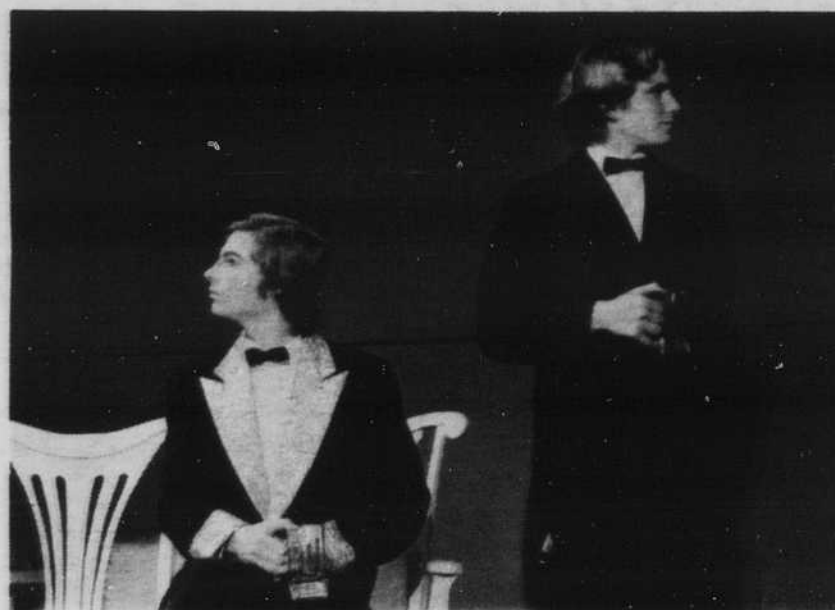
The Old Man



The Old Man (Jeff Armstrong) and the Young Man (Jerry Walton)

'Each in His Own Way'

"Each in His Own Way," a play which explores the elusive qualities of reality by causing a clash between the world of the stage and that of the spectator, continues its run at the University Theater tonight, Friday and Saturday. Jack Randall, director of the play, describes it as one which "pokes fun at character types and institutions prevalent in modern society." Photographic review by Steve Fritz.



The Young Man and the Old Man

drama

'Puss 'n' Tortoise' great for kids

The University Theater has packaged a pair of fairy tales for Eugene youngsters (and oldsters with a young heart), and each one succeeds — for different reasons.

"Puss 'n' Boots," in a special musical adaptation by director Wayne Alan Sipe, played to an audience of about 80 last Friday, and things got pretty lively.

Children have an amazing ability to suspend reality, and Sipe wisely built in lots of opportunities for the kids to join in the plot. In fact, many of the older members of the audience got their biggest laughs from some of the kids' delightfully uninhibited comments. At one point, for example, Puss wonders aloud how to wake the sleeping king, and the suggestions poured forth:

"Shake him," yelled one boy.

"Pound his head!" shrieked a little girl.

"Hi, cat," offered another.

Only occasionally did the show begin to lag — particularly during a long sequence of rehearsing the kids for an upcoming group response. And when the plot bogs down, the children lose interest. They instinctively squirm in their seats, look around and talk to each other, rather than to the characters.

For the most part, though, they had a ball.

Robert Taylor's sets have a nice storybook quality, and the songs by Diane Solomon and John Belles are appropriately simple and tuneful.

Pamela Kuhn is an engaging Puss, Charles Harrill got many well-deserved laughs as the king, and John Belles turned in a great performance as a green ogre who left the kids stunned — momentarily, at least.

It was hard to tell whether the kids who saw "The Tortoise and the Hare" last Friday were stunned, bored or simply mesmerized by the show, but they were not as lively a bunch as the ones who saw "Puss 'n Boots."

This, too, was an original adaptation, written and directed by

Gary Sullivan, and it seemed to have much more appeal to the adults than to the youngsters.

For one thing, Sullivan had to invent a lot of filler to pad the well-known but skimpy plot of the race between the speedy hare and the lethargic tortoise. In doing so, he created a handful of animal characters to hop, wiggle and squirm along with the two leads, but left out the broad slapstick and generous audience participation that characterized "Puss 'n Boots."

Even the dialogue and humor was more adult — somewhere between "The Flintstones" and "Pogo" for the most part. It's hard, for example, to keep a six-year-old engrossed in a show that has a character say lines such as, "He made a subtly derogatory statement."

Nevertheless, there is plenty in "The Tortoise and the Hare" to keep the kids (and adults) entertained. Tom Stoffregen is ideal as the obnoxiously athletic hare, and Mark Agerter is equally perfect as the pleasant, methodical tortoise. Other fine characterizations come from Ian McIver as a pleasingly oafish pack rat, and Debra Martin as a frog.

The set, designed by William Balling and Gary Sullivan, is an imaginative revolving unit that sports half a dozen "scenes" laden with enormous leaves, blades of grass, clover and cattails. Credit also should go to Rachel Johnson, who was saddled with the tough assignment of designing costumes for the animal characters, and succeeded admirably.

And, special accolades should go to the University Theater for taking the time and trouble to produce these children's shows. Hopefully, parents will get word of the remaining performances on May 25, 26, June 1 and 2.

Tickets are only 75 cents, so if you've been waiting two or three months for a G-rated movie to hit Eugene, give some youngster a treat and take him to the UT's shows. You'll probably get a few good laughs yourself.

Scott Barkhurst

Thursday, May 24, 1973